

**Avoyelles Parish Drinking Water Protection Committee Meeting  
March 4, 2004**

1. A meal was served.
2. Meeting called to order. Jerry Smith introduced the State Fire Marshal, V.J. Bella, and explained why the Committee wanted the Fire Marshal's Office to attend.
3. Above Ground Storage Tank (AST) Discussion –  
Mr. Bella thanked the Committee for inviting him and introduced the other representatives of the Fire Marshal's Office that were in attendance. He talked about what was done to protect the environment in the past and what is being done now, in general terms. Mr. Bella said the Fire Marshal's Office only addresses bulk storage tanks and that they leave it up to local ordinances for residential areas. He said that they don't go into farming areas with regulations. He then talked extensively about various laws and regulations. Don Zeringue, also with the Fire Marshal's Office, then discussed the regulations. He said they use NFPA 30, which includes bulk tanks, and NFPA 396. NFPA 30 contains general diking requirements and distance from public right of way requirements. NFPA 396 also has spill control requirements and is more lenient. Mr. Zeringue said between the Fire Marshal's Office and DEQ the ASTs are covered under regulations. Mr. Zeringue and Mr. Bella each talked about farm tanks and Mr. St. Romain said that from what he's seen, the majority of farmers do not put dikes around their ASTs. Mr. Bella said they review ASTs that are put into municipalities, but said that it appears that several types of ASTs are not covered by any regulations. Jesse Means then introduced Wayne Slater of DEQ and also thanked the people that provided the food for the meal. Mr. Slater then went over DEQ's regulations with the group. He talked about how DEQ's regulations cover tanks that are 660 gallons and over, and also how they cover multiple tanks that are next to each other and total 1,320 gallons or more. Wayne said that these ASTs must have a spill plan and he went over the things LDEQ suggests be included in the spill plan. He also gave specific instances of different facilities he has dealt with. Jerry Smith suggested that Todd St. Romain and other distributors get involved with communicating to people the

need to have spill plans. Mr. St. Romain asked about what is required for the plans and Mr. Slater talked about the difference between the federal and state plans. Mr. St. Romain said that he is the president of a fuel distributor's association and that he thinks it would be good to put together a guidance document for distributors to hand out to the farmers. Wayne Slater went further into the guidance that is suggested in DEQ's regulations. Connie Ducote asked if it would be possible for a blank form to be made that farmers could use to assist them in making a spill plan. Jesse Means, Ray Bordelon, and Jerry Smith all expressed their opinion that this could be done. Terry Bonnette asked Todd St. Romain if most distributors are aware of the spill plan regulations and Mr. St. Romain said he didn't think so. Mr. St. Romain then talked about things that need to be done to protect water bodies from spills from tanks and said that he doesn't think farmers worry about it and that all the activity associated with ASTs on farms is unsupervised. Todd St. Romain then said that he believes that the Committee may be more worried about AST spills than need be because AST failures are very rare. He said the underground storage tanks are much worse. He said that when an AST does fail, it would be an unsupervised event. He and Jerry Smith both stated that general spillage from AST use and refilling is not that big of an issue. Micaela Marchand asked for clarification on what is a requirement and what is a suggestion in the DEQ regulations. Wayne Slater said the main requirement is to have a plan. Wayne then gave some more specific examples. Jesse Means then clarified that DEQ's regulations state that spill plans are required, but that what goes into them are up to the facility, and that the plans must show a viable way of protecting the waters of the state from spills. Ray Bordelon then said that the awareness for this must be elevated. Todd St. Romain said that ASTs in the protection areas should be addressed. Mr. Bordelon stressed again that the Committee should look at the issue from an awareness standpoint and that the Committee doesn't want to put a burden on farmers. Mr. Bella said that of all the fires he's answered, bulk storage facilities were the only places where he had to do anything with ASTs, and that he's never answered a fire that dealt with a farm. He suggested that the Committee concentrate on addressing ASTs around the water wells. He suggested that the Committee target only specific sources of contamination. Terry Bonnette said targeting

abandoned wells could help. Mr. Bella said there are strict laws on oil well capping and abandoning oil wells. Ray Bordelon explained to him how the Committee discussed abandoned wells. Mr. Bella suggested contacting DNR about abandoned wells. Howard Fielding, Terry Bonnette, and Keith Mayeux then clarified that the Committee is addressing abandoned water wells. Mr. Bordelon and Jerry Smith then talked about how the Committee is trying to push things like anti-siphoning devices, etc. Micaela Marchand then thanked everyone for coming to discuss the AST issue and said focusing on specifics is a good idea. Howard Fielding said that the first step would be for the Committee and DEQ to prepare something to raise awareness through Todd St. Romain in his capacity as a fuel distributor and the president of a fuel distributing association. Robert Lemoine said that the Committee could get the police jury to pass an ordinance on ASTs and secondary containment. Terry Bonnette said that he thinks the police jury wouldn't pass such an ordinance. Keith Mayeux asked if DEQ's regulations would make the police jury back it. Mr. Bonnette said that DEQ's regulations sets a minimum level of what facilities with ASTs must do. Connie Ducote stated that publicizing the awareness of the issue is what should happen. Ernest Freeman then talked about how important awareness is and discussed his Master Farmers Program. He informed the Committee that he is video taping the meeting and that he will get a tape of the meeting to Bill Branch at the LSU Agriculture Center. He said that Bill Branch could get information on spill prevention and back siphoning to farmers through their education program. He talked about their training certification and said that he will make farmers aware of the issues the Committee discusses. He said that Chip Johnson of the Avoyelles Parish Office of Emergency Preparedness should be involved because companies that have chemicals must register with his Office. Jerry Smith then thanked everyone for the discussion and said Ray Bordelon will be talking about it on his radio show. Mr. Bordelon then read his poem about drinking water with new verses added to it. V.J. Bella said that he thinks the meeting has been a very good one and also told the Committee that he had invited Bob Odom, the Commissioner of Agriculture.

4. The meeting temporarily ended so that the representatives from the Fire Marshal's Office could leave. Before their departure, Ernest Freeman took pictures of the meeting's attendees, and everyone talked to the representatives of the Fire Marshal's Office individually.
5. Micaela Marchand reconvened the meeting.
6. Handout Discussion –  
Ms. Marchand asked the Committee about the status of getting the handouts that were made distributed. For the Used Oil Recyclers list, Connie Ducote said that WalMart wouldn't take any copies because other businesses besides them were listed. Jerry Smith passed out the lists he received to the places he said he would, and P.T. Palermo said he put some in the Bunkie Post Office. Ms. Ducote asked Mr. Palermo if he could distribute some to AutoZone and he said he would. Ray Bordelon wants some more copies of the handout and suggested DEQ e-mail the list to him. Connie Ducote and Caroline Bordelon pointed out to Terry Bonnette that he had committed to distributing copies of the list to Express Lube and AutoZone in Marksville and Carquests in Marksville and Simmesport. Mr. Bonnette said he would do it and Micaela Marchand gave him some more copies.

As for the Abandoned Water Wells fact sheet, Ernest Freeman indicated that he had distributed all of them and that he needed more copies. DEQ will get more copies to him. He also said he'd like a copy e-mailed to him and to Dr. Mary Grodner.

Jesse Means reported to the Committee that the Irrigation Well fact sheet was being printed and that copies of it would be given to the Committee as soon as they are ready.

Jesse Means reported to the Committee that the DEQ is about to come out with a general permit that will address individual domestic sewage treatment systems. Mr. Means asked the Committee if it was ok to table any further development of a fact sheet addressing individual domestic sewage treatment systems until after this permit is finalized. Terry Bonnette told the Committee that at the EPA training conference he had just

attended, individual domestic sewage treatment systems were the main topic of discussion. Ray Bordelon said that the Police Jury had just passed an ordinance on sewage treatment systems. Jerry Smith and Keith Mayeux then discussed field lines and individual sewage requirements. The Committee agreed to table the sewage treatment fact sheet.

7. **Drinking Water Protection Ordinance –**  
Jerry Smith said that he brought copies of the model ordinance to all the water systems in the parish and talked about it with them. He said that he would present the ordinance to the Planning Commission so that it can then present the ordinance to the Police Jury. Micaela Marchand asked what the Police Jury's jurisdiction was. The Committee then discussed the jurisdiction of the parish versus the municipalities, saying basically that the parish has jurisdiction outside the municipalities. Howard Fielding told the Committee about his discussion with EPA Region 6 on jurisdiction issues. He said that Region 6 wants the Committee to be sure that if a municipality passes an ordinance for its drinking water protection area, that the municipality has legal jurisdiction inside that protection area and that Region 6 said that this issue has come up elsewhere. Some Protection Areas cross jurisdictional lines. Jesse Means explained the situation further on how best the Committee could address it in Avoyelles Parish. He said that an ordinance would have to be passed that covers drinking water protection areas inside the Police Jury's jurisdiction and that each municipality that has its protection area inside its particular jurisdiction would have to pass an ordinance. He then showed the Committee some maps that illustrate the point. Terry Bonnette said he thinks all municipalities should pass a drinking water ordinance because some people have old wells inside municipal limits. The Committee then discussed capping requirements of private wells. Jesse Means explained how the ordinance is designed around the drinking water protection areas. Jerry Smith suggested getting municipalities to pass ordinances even if they don't have any of their wells inside their jurisdiction so that any future wells that may be put in could be covered by an ordinance. Mr. Means said that could be an option. Micaela Marchand said that she believes the Committee should focus on the existing list of supply wells because there has been some difficulty in getting the

model ordinance being worked with moving forward, and the Committee agreed. Mr. Smith wanted to know if a water board was set up, could it pass the ordinance. P.T. Palermo discussed who makes the rules that his water district must follow. Mr. Smith said that he would introduce the model ordinance to the Planning Commission and get them to try and get it passed at the Police Jury. Ms. Marchand proposed that DEQ could meet with each mayor that has a protection area in his jurisdiction individually and the Committee agreed. Ms. Marchand will contact the mayors and set up some meetings. Mr. Smith wanted to know if he should wait until after the mayor's meetings to talk to the Planning Commission and the Committee decided that he should go ahead and do it as soon as possible. It was decided that DEQ will talk to the mayors individually and try to take some of the Committee members to these meetings and at the same time Jerry Smith will present the ordinance to the Planning Commission. It was stated that the next Planning Commission meeting is on March 17.

8. Used Oil Recycling Information Discussion – Micaela Marchand told the Committee how Connie Ducote got an article in the newspaper about used oil recycling. Ms. Ducote told the Committee that the newspaper staff was very receptive to her and she said the Committee should continue submitting articles about what it does to the newspaper. Micaela Marchand said she would try to get another press release to Ms. Ducote. It was also suggested that the newspaper be invited to the next Committee meeting.
9. Jerry Smith asked if anyone had any other business and Terry Bonnette talked about some new wells that are being drilled in Odenburg. He then moved that the meeting be closed.
10. The Committee decided to hold the next meeting on April 7<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm with the place yet to be determined. It was suggested to have it in Cottonport, so Jerry Smith will look into that option. Robert Lemoine said Moreauville could be the second option.
11. Before the meeting was dismissed, Howard Fielding said that a guidance from DEQ regulations on spill plans for about above ground storage tanks should be prepared and given to Todd St.

Romain so that he could get this information out to the farming community and to other people that have above ground storage tanks. The Committee agreed to this action.

12. The meeting was then ended.